

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

- versus -

15-cr-59 (MJD/FLN)

HAMZA AHMED,

Defendant.

DEFENDANT HAMZA AHMED'S BAIL PROPOSAL

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Mr. Ahmed respectfully submits this memorandum setting forth a proposal for his release on bail into the custody of his father, subject to home detention and electronic monitoring, and a program of religious instruction, counseling and volunteer employment coordinated by the Dar Al-Hijrah Mosque of Minneapolis. This proposal has been prepared with a view to engaging Mr. Ahmed productively with his family and community.¹ It proposes options for many of the key issues relevant to his release, including residence, religious practice, counseling, employment and educational opportunities, but can be modified and supplemented with input from the Court, the Probation Department and experts.

A. Residence

We propose that Mr. Ahmed live with his father, Naji Ibrahim, who resides with Mr. Ahmed's uncle, Kamal Ibrahim, and aunt, Naima Osman, in North Minneapolis. He will be subject to home detention, with electronic monitoring, and only be permitted to leave the home for scheduled religious, counseling, educational, work and legal appointments. He will not have access to cell-phones, computers or the Internet, absent a specific court order. Mr. Ahmed previously lived with his mother in Savage, but since she has four children under the age of 12, we believe that residing with his father and uncle would be optimal under the current circumstances. A declaration from Naji Ibrahim setting forth the residential circumstances is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

¹ While not conceding the truth of the accusations in the indictment, we have formulated this proposal using insights from the literature addressing the deradicalization of those who have expressed or acted upon extremist ideologies. See Rabasa et al., *Deradicalizing Islamic Extremists*, Rand Corporation (2010) (the "Rand Report") at xiv, available at http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2010/RAND_MG1053.pdf (noting that in the context of terrorist rehabilitation programs, repressive measures can backfire, and the goal should not be deradicalization but rather incentivized disengagement); see also *id.* at 192-93 ("aftercare [for former radicalized detainees] should include locating the ex-radical in a supportive environment and facilitating his or her reintegration into society").

Alternatively, Mr. Ahmed could reside in a half-way house, although we note that such placements are currently limited and would involve some significant isolation from his family.²

B. Religious Practice

As set forth in the accompanying declaration of Sheikh Abdisalam Adam (Exhibit B), Mr. Ahmed will regularly attend religious services and Islamic instruction at the Dar Al-Hijrah Mosque, located in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood of Minneapolis. Over the past 17 years, it has grown to be one of the busiest mosques, providing a broad range of services, including Islamic study classes, five daily prayers, Friday prayers, Eid celebrations, Ramadan nightly prayers, and many more spiritual service programs.

The Dar Al-Hijrah Mosque is run by the Islamic Civic Society of America (ICSA) (<http://icsaweb.org/>), established in 1998 by community leaders committed to the simultaneous advancement of Islamic principles and democratic values. Members of ICSA are dedicated to governance for the common good while addressing the specific needs of the Muslim community. Its elders and Imams are strongly committed to democratic ideals, principles of tolerance, and the rule of law.

Sheikh Abdisalam Adam is the board chair of ICSA, and has visited Mr. Ahmed at Sherburne County Jail. Sheikh Abdisalam is also on the board of the Islamic League of Somali Scholars in America.³ He is well-known in the community for his anti-extremist teachings. As set forth in his declaration, he and the elders and Imams of the Dar Al-Hijrah Mosque are

² See Rand Report at 186 (noting that rehabilitation programs that include an alleged ex-extremist's family "appear to increase the probability that the individual will remain disengaged").

³ In addition, Sheikh Abdisalam is a licensed public school teacher, who has worked for St. Paul Public Schools for 18 years as an ESL teacher and as the Somali Cultural Specialist with the ELL Department and Office of Family Engagement and Community Partnerships.

committed to taking an active role in establishing the religious, counseling and volunteer employment aspects of Mr. Ahmed's bail program.⁴

C. Education

Mr. Ahmed was enrolled as a nursing student at Minneapolis Community and Technical College prior to his arrest. We propose that he re-enroll in these courses. Alternatively, we propose that he take online courses at MCTC or another third level institution, using a computer that has been encrypted to permit Internet access solely for this purpose.

D. Counseling

Mr. Ahmed will attend counseling primarily at Dar Al Hijrah (*see* Exhibit B). Additional counseling can be established with the assistance of the Probation Department and experts.⁵ The undersigned has also identified a licensed schools counselor with extensive experience dealing with young Somali-American men in Minneapolis, who could prove to be a very effective counselor for Mr. Ahmed, and is willing to participate in that endeavor.

E. Other Activities

Mr. Ahmed will also do volunteer work at Dar Al Hijrah, as outlined by Sheikh Abdisalam Adam. In addition, counsel will explore other volunteer opportunities as well as options for Mr. Ahmed to engage in team sports, such as basketball and soccer.

⁴ If one of Mr. Ahmed's co-defendants is also released and wishes to attend services and/or counseling at Dar Al Hijrah, arrangements can be made to ensure that two defendants are never present at the mosque at any one time.

⁵ *See* Rand Report at xviii ("[t]he best-designed rehabilitation programs (for instance, the one in Singapore) continue to offer (and sometimes require) theological and psychological counseling for those who have been released. Continued interaction with a credible interlocutor provides ongoing emotional support, helps to dispel doubts, and ensures that behavioral and ideational changes endure.").

Subject to terms proposed above and/or developed by the Probation Department and the Court, we respectfully request that Hamza Ahmed be released on bail, with the condition that he is on home detention with electronic monitoring at the home of his aunt and uncle.

Date: Minneapolis, Minnesota
June 19, 2015

Respectfully Submitted.

/s/

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